

## **Certified Addictions Counseling Program at the CPD**

The University of Denver's Center for Professional Development is proud to offer the seven-course series of trainings required for Certified Addictions Counseling. Interested professionals may take the courses one at a time depending on their schedule and educational needs, or they may attend the Center's "CAC Camp," which includes all seven courses in one intensive series. [Click here](#) for more on CAC Camp.

Additionally, the CPD offers a licensure exam preparation course, available multiple times throughout the year. We also offer a Substance Abuse Consultation Series. For more information about these programs, [click here](#).

### **Course Title**

- Certified Addictions Counseling Series: Pharmacology I
- CAC Level I Required Class

### **Overview of Training**

Training in pharmacology is a cornerstone of addiction counseling and a major part of what differentiates the professional field of addiction counseling from other mental health disciplines. This class will provide a solid base of knowledge about the drugs of abuse including what is happening in human physiology and behaviors. All CAC required classes seek to enhance the ability of the counselor to offer treatment services in a manner that respects gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural, familial, systemic and socioeconomic diversity.

### **Course Content**

- a. Definitions of key terminology, including classifications of addicting chemicals (stimulant, depressant, hallucinogenic, cannabis, designer drugs, etc.) and abuse vs addiction.
- b. Methods of introducing substances into the body and the differences in impact based on method of introduction.
- c. Basic information highlighting key neurotransmitters and the reward pathways in the brain affected by the use of drugs and alcohol.
  - a. Identifying severity of substance use (abuse vs. dependence).
  - b. Drug actions and genetic implications
  - c. Overview of physiological systems impacted by drugs to include behaviors, physiological impairments, long term effects and life threatening concerns
- d. Definitions of the various classifications of drugs including: drug actions on the body, types of withdrawal and the process of detoxification, the potential complications of poly substance use, and the Half-Life of each drug.
  - a. Depressants
  - b. Narcotics
  - c. Stimulants
  - d. Hallucinogens
  - e. Cannabis
  - f. Inhalants

- g. Steroids
- h. Prescription drugs of abuse and the growing societal problems and implications
- i. Other drugs including over-the-counter (OTC), psychotropic medications, homeopathic medications, vitamin and herbal supplements, nutritional supplements, energy drinks, etc. and designer drugs.
- e. Types of withdrawal and process of detoxification.
- f. Overview of drug testing including urinalysis, saliva, patches, and hair and blood analysis, and others

### **Demonstration of Competencies**

Upon completion of this training class, as measured by skill demonstration and examination, the participant will be able to:

- a. Name at least three classifications of addicting chemicals and describe the ways in which they are introduced into the body.
- b. Describe how the method of delivery of drugs of abuse into the body impacts the effects felt by the user
- c. Define the half-life of a drug and ways in which psychoactive chemicals affect neurotransmission in the brain
- d. Describe how the functions of the human body are affected by the use of mind-altering chemicals and the behaviors that can lead to long term and life threatening concerns
- e. Be able to name the symptoms of intoxication and withdrawal for each drug classification
- f. Understand the impact of poly-substance use

### **Suggested References**

- a. Hanson, G. R.; Venturelli, P. J. and Fleckenstein, A. E. (2006 or most recent edition). *Drugs and Society*. Jones and Bartlett Pub. \*
- b. Inaba, D.S. Cohen, W. E. (2000 or most recent edition). *Uppers, Downers, All Arounders*. CNS Productions, Inc. \*  
\* *PowerPoint slides are available for each text.*
- c. NIDA has PowerPoint presentations that include neuro-imaging meant to be reproduced for teaching purposes. Teaching packets 3, 4, and 5 at [www.nida.com](http://www.nida.com).
- d. *Psychopharmacology*. R.H. Ettinger (2010), Pearson Books.

### **Videos:**

- *Animated Neuroscience: The Action of Nicotine, Cocaine and Marijuana in the Brain*. Films for the Humanities & Sciences: <http://ffh.films.com>.
- *Constant Craving, The Science of Addiction*. Films for the Humanities & Sciences: <http://ffh.films.com>.
- *Designer Drugs*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.
- *Herbal Remedies*. Films for the Humanities & Sciences: <http://ffh.films.com>.
- *Hallucinogens and Human Physiology*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.
- *Marijuana: Neurochemistry and Physiology*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.

- *PCP and Ketamine*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.
- [http://www.cnsproductions.com/Videos/Addiction\\_Education\\_Videos/Drug\\_Education\\_Videos\\_DVD/22.html](http://www.cnsproductions.com/Videos/Addiction_Education_Videos/Drug_Education_Videos_DVD/22.html)*Prescription And OTC Drugs: Misuse and Abuse DVD*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.
- *Psychoactive Club Drugs and Inhalants*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.
- *Stimulants*. CNS Productions, Inc.: <http://www.cnsproductions.com>.

### **Instructor Bio**

Thea Wessel is an addictions counselor with her own private practice in Colorado. She has been working in the criminal and addictions fields for seven years. Ms. Wessel earned her master's degree in forensic psychology from the University of Denver and has also earned her LPC, LAC and MAC. She is currently the president of the Colorado Association of Addictions Professionals (CAAP) and also teaches as an adjunct professor at the University of Denver. Ms. Wessel continually challenges herself and others to provide quality addictions treatment and to educate the community about addictions issues.